

EDWARDS / TILSON BIBLE

Currently owned by Mars Hill College Mars Hill North Carolina

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## INTRODUCTION

To the Descendants of the union of Abel Edwards and Polly Potts the Edwards Bible is the most important research tool that we have. The hand written genealogical information written on 4 pages within this Family Bible is considered by some Edwards's researchers not to be trusted, falsified and in some cases erased to suit the needs of the owner of this bible. On the other side of the coin as an Abel Edwards and Polly Potts researcher for many years I consider this the most important tool of our research as descendants.

The researchers that consider this a falsified document believe this because of the Edwards Fortune<sup>1</sup> fiasco of the late 1800's to early 1900's when many Edwards descendants of many lines throughout the country were trying to have a stake in the Millions of dollars that many believed were to be had in Manhattan New York. Anyone can read about this Edwards Fortune situation on the internet and magazines and books. This however has nothing to do with the Edwards Bible and the very old entries within the four pages of this historical Bible.

The entries of the Bible that were written in ink are very old and cannot be discounted as to their age in my opinion. For the entries to be incorrect and falsified the dates of birth of the children of Abel and Polly Edwards and the grandchildren names and dates of birth would be incorrect. I can say that I have checked these dates to actual documented sources within the states where these descendants migrated to and a very high percentage of these descendants have the very same dates of birth when compared to the Edwards Bible. This in my opinion could not be so, with the informer upon the death more than likely not at all being aware of the Edwards Bible in North Carolina, nor would they be aware of the person who made these entries.

I have written many times over the years concerning this Edwards Bible. My correspondence concerning this bible with other researchers has been positive, and sometimes very negative. If you believe this Edwards Bible to be a documented source of genealogical evidence or you believe the Edwards Bible to be a falsified document it is up to you to decide.

As an Abel Edwards and Polly Potts researcher of many years I can say that I believe the older entries to be exactly what they appear to be, written by the same hand with the same hand strokes with the same old ink. And I consider it a Secondary Source of genealogical history for my Edwards family.

Johnny J. Edwards



5<sup>th</sup> Great Grandson to  
Abel Edwards and Polly Potts

**CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF OWNERSHIP  
OF THE  
EDWARDS / TILSON BIBLE**

AMANDA EDWARDS -M- ABRAHAM E. TILSON  
:  
THOMAS JEFFERSON TILSON -M- ATLAS CARTER  
:  
ROBERT YATES TILSON  
:  
TOMMY TILSON

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Abel Edwards and Polly Potts are the progenitors of this Edwards line<sup>2</sup>, and they were my 5th great grandparents. Abel Edwards and family can be found in Virginia pre-1776 and migrated to what is now Sullivan County Tennessee (ca.) 1780.

As the story goes Amanda Edwards Tilson was the first person to own the Edwards Bible and it is believed that Amanda Edwards Tilson was the person who wrote the entries in the Edwards Bible. Amanda Edwards Tilson gave the bible to her son Thomas Jefferson Tilson, which in turn gave the bible to his son Robert Yates Tilson, which in turn gave the Edwards Bible to his son Tommy Tilson. Tommy Tilson is the person who gave the bible to the Mars Hill College, Mars Hill North Carolina.<sup>3</sup>

Most people don't know that Amanda Edwards Tilson's brother William Erwin Nave Edwards gave the land which the Mars Hill College stands on today. William Ervin Nave Edwards land and home was on the same land as the college.

At this time I can't recall who donated the money to repair the bible which is now in the possession of Mars Hill College. If my recollection is correct I was told that it was Owen Edwards, a cousin to the Tilson's. According <sup>4</sup>to Mrs. Henry Clay Edwards the amount collected by the College for the restoration of the Edwards Bible was \$1,100.00

**Update 7-19-2010<sup>5</sup>**

I was contacted by R K a Descendant of Henry Nave Edwards b.1824. Henry Nave being a direct Descendant of Thomas Edwards b.1774.

R K explained to me that the Edwards bible was in the Attic of a Tilson Cousin living in Burnsville North Carolina until he suggested to the family that they should donate the bible to the Mars Hill College. R K's family source and connection to the Edwards Bible was Terry Tilson.

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<sup>2</sup> Edwards Bible. Deed Records Sullivan County Tennessee. Son Joshua Edwards b.1781 Memorial. Son Arthur Edwards b.1786 1850 census. Family Records.

<sup>3</sup> Letter written to me from Seth Lippard cousin to Tommy Tilson. (Edwards 298 & 360)

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Mrs. Henry Clay Edwards. Edwards 258

<sup>5</sup> Email from R K to Johnny J. Edwards 7-19-2010

The bible today is repaired to the extent that can be done considering its age. Much money was spent to repair the aging bible and it is now in the Appalachian Room in the above mentioned college under glass for its protection.

The photographs of the bible pages are copyrighted and cannot be re-produced unless permission is given by the Mars Hill College, Mars Hill N.C.

Written by,  
Johnny J. Edwards  
5th great grandson to  
Abel Edwards and Polly Potts  
1996

**EDWARDS FAMILY BIBLE**

Transcribed by Johnny J. Edwards 1996

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PAGE # 339

\*\*NOTE: THE INFORMATION AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE WAS HANDWRITTEN

E.M TILSON WAS BORNED 1880/4  
JAN THE 21

J F.S. TILSON WAS BORN 1886 APRIL  
: THE 13

PAGE #577

:

MARRIAGES

ABEL EDWARDS WAS MARRIED TO  
POLLY FOTS JANUARY 24TH 1764

FROM WHOM WAS BORN:

1. JOHN EDWARDS JULY 12, 1772  
2. THOMAS EDWARDS SEPT 23, 1774  
3. NANCY EDWARDS JAN 25, 1777  
4. OWEN EDWARDS JAN 23, 1779  
5. JOSHUA EDWARDS AUG 11, 1781  
6. ABEL EDWARDS NOV 8, 1783  
7. ARTHUR EDWARDS SEPT 17, 1786

JOHN EDWARDS & LUCY SAMS WAS MARRIED  
WAS MARRIED

FROM WHO WAS BORN

MARY EDWARDS WAS BORN THE 5TH DAY OF  
DECEMBER 1797

ELIZABETH EDWARDS WAS BORN  
THE 15TH DAY OF OCTOBER 1799

WILSON EDWARDS WAS BORN 7TH DAY  
OF AUGUST 1801

CATTY EDWARDS WAS BORN 16TH DAY  
OF SEPTEMBER 1803

NANCY EDWARDS WAS BORN  
MARCH ?? 1806

PATTY EDWARDS WAS BORN  
AUGUST 28 1808

HIRAM EDWARDS ?????????? BORN  
NOV 9 1827

JULY 28

:

MARRIAGES

THOMAS EDWARDS & BETSY ERVIN  
WAS MARRIED

FROM WHOM WAS BORN

1799  
JOHN EDWARDS WAS BORN APRIL 22

ABEL EDWARDS WAS BORN  
APRIL THE 10TH 1801

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* ILLEGIBLE WRITING IN THIS \*  
\* AREA. \*  
\* \*\*\*\*\*

JOSHUA EDWARDS WAS BORN MARCH THE 1838

NANCY EDWARDS & LITTLEBERRY SAMS  
WAS MARRIED

FROM WHOM WAS BORN

ORRA SAMS WAS BORN JUNE 9 1798

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* ILLEGIBLE HANDWRITING IN \*  
\* THIS AREA. \*  
\* \*\*\*\*\*

LUCINDA EDWARDS WAS BORN DEC ??, 1777

STACY EDWARDS WAS BORN MAY 21 1817

AMY EDWARDS WAS BORN DEC 7 1818

PAGE #678

BIRTHS

OWEN EDWARDS & MARTHA SAMS  
WAS MARRIED

FROM WHOM WAS BORN

WILEY EDWARDS WAS BORN DEC 8 1807

ARTHUR EDWARDS WAS BORN SEPT 27 1811

JULIA EDWARDS WAS BORN AUG 23 1813

JOHN EDWARDS BORN JAN 19 1816

WASHINGTON EDWARDS BORN MAY 26 1818

JOSHUA EDWARDS BORN APR 1 1822

A. TILSON WAS BORN IN THE YEAR OF  
OUR LORD JANUARY THE 13 1819

JOSHUA EDWARDS & NANCY ERVIN  
WAS MARRIED SEPTEMBER 30 1809

FROM WHOM WAS BORN

SAMUEL EDWARDS WAS BORN NOV 22 1803

OWEN EDWARDS WAS BORN NOV 5 1804

ABEL EDWARDS WAS BORN MAY 18 1809

POLLY EDWARDS WAS BORN JUNE 11 1811

MATILDA EDWARDS WAS BORN OCT 7 1813

ETHELBERT EDWARDS WAS BORN AUG 2 1817

ELDRIDGE EDWARDS WAS BORN NOV 11 1819

JOSHUA EDWARDS WAS MARRIED  
TO DRUCILLA DOLANY DECEMBER  
9TH 1835

BIRTHS

ABEL EDWARDS & ELIZABETH HAMTON  
WAS MARRIED SEPT 18 1804

FROM WHOM WAS BORN

POLLY EDWARDS WAS BORN AUG 15 1805

WILLIAM EDWARDS WAS BORN OCT 7 1806

CYNTHIA EDWARDS BORN AUG 13 1808

ELIZA EDWARDS WAS BORN MAR 21 1810

ARTIMACIA EDWARDS BORN OCT 27 1811

ALTONOS BORN JUNE 19 1813

RACHEL EDWARDS JAN 3 1815

PHENY/PHENNY EDWARDS  
BORN APRIL 3 1824

ARTHUR EDWARDS & FREELOVE CLOUSE  
WAS MARRIED FEB 26 1807

FROM WHOM WAS BORN

JOSHUA EDWARDS WAS BORN APR 30 1808

OWEN EDWARDS WAS BORN NOV 26 1809

JOHN EDWARDS WAS BORN FEB 7 1812

WILLIAM EDWARDS WAS BORN JAN 30 1814

THOMAS EDWARDS WAS BORN FEB 22 1816

KATEY EDWARDS WAS BORN FEB 26 1817

POLLY EDWARDS WAS BORN AUG 21 1819

ABEL EDWARDS WAS BORN 1821

ISAAC EDWARDS WAS BORN MAY 28 1827

DEATHS

J.W. ANDERSON  
WAS BORN JULY TWO 19  
1869

MARTA C. TILSON  
WAS IN YEAR OF OUR LORD  
7 OF JAN 1878

ARJULA TILSON WAS BORN  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
OCTOBER 1879

REBECA LOMINA TILSON  
WAS BORN JANUARY THE 5TH  
1981

## FAMILY RECORD

## DEATHS

1 ALLY LEE TILSON  
1 WAS BORN 8 AUG  
1 THE 6TH 1884

1 DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 7TH  
2 OF OCT 1869

: DEPARTED THIS LIFE  
: AUGUST THE 1 1897





PAGE # 680

FAMILY RECORD

DEATHS

A.E. TILSON  
AND AMANDA EDWARDS  
WAS MARRIED IN THE  
1876

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J.N. ANDERSON  
WAS BORN JULY THE 19  
1869

---

MARTA C. TILSON  
WAS IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
OCTOBER 1879

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ARSULA TILSON WAS BORN  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
OCTOBER 1879

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REBECA LOWINA TILSON  
WAS BORN JANUARY THE 5TH  
1881

DEATHS

ALLY LEE TILSON  
WAS BORN M AUG  
THE 6TH 1884

DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 7TH  
OF OCT 1869

DEPARTED THIS LIFE  
AUGUST THE 1 1877